

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

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HINCHEY CALLS ON BLAIR AND BUSH TO ACCOUNT FOR USE OF DISCREDITED INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-22) today called on President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair to consent to thorough investigations of their actions that precipitated the war in Iraq. Hinchey spoke at a press conference just prior to Blair's address to a joint session of Congress.

"I welcome Prime Minister Blair to the United States and to our capital," said Hinchey. "I have long admired Mr. Blair and the good work he has done over the years.

"My admiration and respect for the prime minister does not extend to his actions concerning the war in Iraq. I find myself in the unusual position of concurring with the conservative leader of the British House of Commons, Iain Duncan Smith, who yesterday told Mr. Blair, 'You are rapidly becoming a stranger to the truth. ... You have created a culture of deceit and spin at the heart of government.' This characterization is fitting for our president as well.

"Both Prime Minister Blair and President Bush want to put behind them the controversy over their rationale for going to war with Iraq. But deceit cannot be shed so easily, especially a concerted deceit such as this, which has led to the deaths of hundreds on our side and thousands on the other.

"Blair should consent to a full inquiry by the British judiciary. In this country as well we must conduct a complete and independent investigation. The people of the United States and the United Kingdom need to know the truth about how intelligence was manipulated and misused to win their support for war."